

Forum: Security Council

Issue: Containing North Korean Aggression

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Introduction: The Korean peninsula has been an area of much unrest since the end of the Korean war in the early 1950's. The conflict started at the end of the Second World War, when the Japanese invaders vacated the land and the country became divided over contrast in preferred ideologies and regimes. North Korea, or the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has long-since been an area of unrest and much political tension. In the more recent years, North Korea has been in the media due to its self-imposed isolation from the rest of the world, as well as the harsh regime of Kim Jong Il and his son and successor, Kim Jong Un - both of whom are descendants of Kim Il Sung, the first North Korean leader. In terms of recent years, international relations have been turbulent as regards to the country due to North Korean nuclear testing and war threats, as well as their ongoing situation of poor human rights. Compared to their ever growing and thriving neighbours - China and South Korea, both of which are powerful Eastern Asian economies - the Democratic People's Republic is as sealed off and troublesome as ever.

Key Terms Defined:

- Aggression: the action of attacking without provocation, or threatening to attack and hostile behaviour.
- Ballistic missile: a missile with a high, arching trajectory that is initially powered and guided but falls under gravity onto its target.
- Containment: the action or policy of preventing the expansion of a hostile country or influence.
- Regime: a government, especially an authoritarian one.
- Sanction: a threatened penalty for disobeying a law or rule.
- Nuclear tests: Nuclear weapons tests are experiments carried out to determine the effectiveness, yield and explosive capability of nuclear weapons.
- Peninsula: a piece of land almost surrounded by water or projecting out into a body of water.
- Armistice: an agreement made by opposing sides in a war to stop fighting for a certain time; a truce.

History: One of the most famous events of the Cold War, the Korean War may as well be named a proxy war. Two different ideologies were at war with each other - socialism in Red Russia, or the USSR, and capitalism in the United States of America. As the Korean peninsula was liberated after years of Japanese occupation at the end of the Second World War, the two superpowers entered to set up new governments. Of course, with the Soviet mission of expansion, the North, whence they came in, would be governed by a communist regime. Henceforth, the U.S. who had sought to contain communism established a capitalist government in the south. Under Kim Il Sung, the founder of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the North soon invaded the South due to Kim Il Sung's vision of a unified Korea. The war caused much loss for both sides, and in 1953, an armistice was signed under the supervision of the United Nations.

As can be seen in the occurrences of the more recent years, North Korea has not held to the armistice agreement. From then on, North Korea has made the news because of its nuclear testing, blatant opposition of the United States and its allies, as well as nuclear central construction, satellite launches and controversial human rights record. In 2006, the DPRK conducted its first nuclear test with its blast failing to measure a great deal. Following the atomic detonation, the discussions of nuclear disarmament and reconciliation of international ties intensified. China, one of North Korea's sole allies, sought to better ties with North Korea and a representative travelled to China for the six-nation nuclear disarmament talks. No desired conclusion was reached. As such, the United States began to place economic and political sanctions on the DPRK. Impoverishment soon forced the country to negotiate with foreign powers and so by mid-2008, the North Koreans had gotten rid of a large number of items in their nuclear program, and the UN declared that thousands of tons of food were being poured into the country by the U.S. A while later, the nuclear disarmament was suspended, as they accused the U.S. of failing to abide by their previous disarmament for aid agreement - hunger in the country was worse than ever before. UN nuclear inspectors were barred from the country and plans were made to rebuild previously shut down nuclear reactors. While relations fluctuated in the years to follow, on July 4th 2009, North Korea fired several ballistic missiles, violating a UN resolution and in obvious defiance of the US. They also declared that it no longer felt bound by the 1953 truce ending the war, along with declaring that they successfully carried out underground nuclear tests. China, Russia and the U.S. fiercely objected to this and the UN placed even harsher sanctions on the North Koreans.

In 2010, North Korea increased tension a great deal by sinking a South Korean warship, to which the U.S. responds with tougher sanctions. In early 2011, the country's livestock is hit by a wave of disease, threatening the already desperate food shortages. After the death of his father months later, Kim Jong Un became the supreme leader of North Korea, which was the start of many events. In 2012, the North announces it has missiles capable of hitting the U.S., after South Korea and the States unveil a nuclear deal. A satellite is put into orbit with a rocket launch in December, which the UN, including China, considered a violation of a ban on North Korean ballistic missile tests. In further violation, North Korea conducted its third and most powerful

nuclear trial yet in early 2013. The UN Security Council placed more political and economic sanctions and the country threatened the U.S. with a pre-emptive nuclear attack. All tourists were then warned by the North to leave both Koreas, in order to avoid a potential war. A proposal is then made that they may consider reducing tensions if sanctions are lifted, so the U.S. and South Korea end their joint military drills they had begun when the threats intensified. South Korea rejects.

The last three events were in the months of May, June and July of this year: North Korea first tested four short-range missiles and sentenced a U.S. tour operator to labour for due to supposed anti-government crimes. Then, South Korea agreed to hold talks on reopening a joint industrial complex and restoring the Red Cross hotline the North had cut - their only means of communication across borders. Finally, Panama charged a crew of a North Korean ship found carrying weapons, which Cuba said they had sent to them for repairs.

Key Issues: Up to now, there have been numerous attempts to make peace, however despite all the international effort, every agreement made was violated by the North Koreans. This shows their good will/compliance demonstrations are only due to their extreme desperation for aid. This shows that the threat of punishment, or consequence isn't strong enough for North Korea to stay committed to their word. Another problem is the fact that they are reluctant to disarm. North Korea suggests that the only reason they will not destroy all nuclear weapons is because it is an act of defence, proving that they are powerful enough to confront their "arch-enemy" the United States. They have said that they are unwilling to co-operate unless they see foreign powers comply and disarm their nuclear weapons, which the UN Security Council has debated. It doesn't ease the situation that the U.S. has been working with South Korea and Japan in order to defend land, furthermore the U.S. has sent B-52 bomber planes to prepare for potential attack. Not only does the situation concern nuclear leaders of the world, it also concerns a vast majority of the members of the UN, as North Korea has quite clearly indicated that they have ballistic missiles capable of hitting the mainland U.S., meaning that all other countries along the way could be potential targets in the instance of provocation. This forcibly brings many other countries into the picture, which is why containing North Korean aggression is key.

General Overview of Topic/UN perspective: The United Nations is challenged by the situation, and South Korea has officially referred the matter to the Security Council. The task here is most likely to show to the DPRK that they are recognised and taken seriously (as this seems to be one of North Korea's primary concerns), but that the international community remains united in front of aggression. China has of course maintained its position as North Korea's main ally, however, following the recent incidents, the Chinese too have sided with the United Nations, condemning unprovoked North Korean threats. As of now, it seems that the North Koreans feel that their needs are being ignored by the United States who pose the greatest

threat to them, and side with their biggest adversaries. The UN has come to the conclusion that North Korea will not be considered a nuclear-weapon state, and has urged their leaders to accept peace talks, instead of continuing to arm. The consequences of North Korean actions has only been placing sanctions so far, which obviously has not done too much in the name of containing them, as countries as far as Panama have become involved. Returning to the negotiating table would most likely be the first step in resolving the political tensions.

Major Parties Involved and Their Views:

North Korea: Is provoked by the United States and their actions. Will not disarm, suggests that the United Nations acts under the heavy influence of the U.S. However is also dependent on the United Nations and the help that will come from it, as the people are devastated by food shortages and disease.

South Korea: Is under constant threat due to proximity with the North and their nuclear weapons. Relies on the UN powers to take action, is in a diplomatic struggle to improve relations between the two Koreas, however the South Korean people seem to have become accustomed to the tedious threats of the North, thus calm. Many South Korean people have been killed/enslaved by North Korea, so their grievances are significantly greater than any other party involved.

China: Remaining as North Korea's major (and sole) ally, China has often acted as a mediator in events, however, after the more recent events, has condemned North Korean actions and now gives the impression of losing patience.

U.S.A: Deemed North Korea's "arch-enemy", the US holds a major role in the Korean crisis, as most of the North Korean moves made are in response to the United States. As they are supposedly within North Korea's nuclear range, the Americans may act as the Security Council's driving force in reaching some sort of decision, as the countries have had no formal relations from the start and economically speaking, the US has a huge impact on the North Korean imports. Anything the US does, the DPRK is sure to react to it.

Japan: The Japanese are second in line after South Korea in terms of victimisation on the North Korean part. Many Japanese citizens have died/gone missing because of North Korea, while the political opposition remains between the two parties. Japan has had a say in a majority of the denuclearisation talks and summits, and is now in the immediate range of North Korean aggression. As such, it is in Japan's greatest interest for the DPRK to be contained and pacified.

Timeline of Events:

1953 - Armistice ends Korean War, which has cost two million lives.

1991 - North and South Korea join the United Nations.

1992 - North Korea agrees to allow inspections by International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), but over next two years refuses access to sites of suspected nuclear weapons production.

1994 - Death of Kim Il-sung. Kim Jong-il succeeds him as leader, but doesn't take presidential title. North Korea agrees to freeze nuclear programme in return for \$5bn worth of free fuel and two nuclear reactors.

1995 - US formally agrees to help provide two modern nuclear reactors designed to produce less weapons-grade plutonium.

2000 - Summit in Pyongyang between Kim Jong-il and South Korean President Kim Dae-jung. North stops propaganda broadcasts against the South.

2002 January - US President George W Bush says North Korea is part of an "axis of evil", along with states such as Iraq and Iran. Pyongyang says Mr Bush has not stopped far short of declaring war.

2003 January - North Korea withdraws from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), a key international agreement aimed at preventing the spread of atomic weapons.

2003 April - Delegations from: North Korea, the US and China begin talks in Beijing on North Korea's nuclear ambitions, the first such discussions since the start of the nuclear crisis.

2003 October - Pyongyang says it has reprocessed 8,000 nuclear fuel rods, obtaining enough material to make up to six nuclear bombs.

2004 June - Third round of six-nation talks on nuclear programme ends inconclusively. North Korea pulls out of scheduled September round.

2005 February - Pyongyang says it has built nuclear weapons for self-defence.

2006 July - North Korea test-fires a long-range missile, and some medium-range ones, to an international outcry. Despite reportedly having the capability to hit the US, the long-range Taepodong-2 crashes shortly after take-off, US officials say.

2006 October - North Korea claims to test a nuclear weapon for the first time.

2007 February - Six-nation talks on nuclear programme resume in Beijing. In a last-minute deal, North Korea agrees to close its main nuclear reactor in exchange for fuel aid.

2008 February - South Korea's new conservative President Lee Myung-bak says aid to North

conditional on nuclear disarmament and human rights progress.

2008 March-April - North-South relations deteriorate sharply. North Korea expels Southern managers from joint industrial base, test-fires short-range missiles and accuses President Lee Myung-bak of sending a warship into Northern waters.

2008 June - In what is seen as a key step in the denuclearisation process, North Korea makes its long-awaited declaration of its nuclear assets.

2008 September - North Korea accuses the US of not fulfilling its part of a disarmament-for-aid deal and says it is preparing to restart the Yongbyon reactor.

2008 November - North Korea says it will cut off all overland travel to and from the South from December, and blames South Korea for pursuing a confrontational policy.

2008 December - Pyongyang says it will slow down work to dismantle its nuclear programme in response to a US decision to suspend energy aid. The US move came following the breakdown of international talks to end the country's nuclear activities.

2009 January - North Korea says it is scrapping all military and political deals with the South, accusing Seoul of "hostile intent".

2009 April - North Korea launches a rocket carrying what it says is a communications satellite; its neighbours accuse it of testing long-range missile technology. After criticism from the UN Security Council, North Korea walks out of international six-party talks aimed at winding up its nuclear programme.

Kim Jong-il attends parliamentary vote to re-elect him leader, in his first major state appearance since a suspected stroke in 2008.

2009 May - North Korea says it successfully carries out an underground nuclear test, its second ever, drawing protests from the US, China and Russia. It also announces that it no longer considers itself bound by the terms of the 1953 truce that ended the war between the two Koreas. Defence Secretary Robert Gates says US "will not accept" a nuclear-armed North Korea.

2009 June - North Korea sentences US journalists Laura Ling and Euna Lee to 12 years hard labour for allegedly crossing the border illegally. They are freed in August, after former US President Bill Clinton visits to help secure their release.

UN Security Council votes unanimously to impose tougher sanctions. Pyongyang responds by

saying it will view any US-led attempt to blockade the country as an "act of war" and that it plans to "weapon-ise" its plutonium stocks.

2010 March - Sinking of South Korean warship Cheonan, allegedly by the North, raises tensions to new heights.

2010 July - United States announces new sanctions on North Korea in response to sinking of Cheonan warship.

2010 September - As US President Obama signs new sanctions into law, the North makes overtures to the South, including an offer of more family reunions and acceptance of flood-damage aid.

2011 December - Kim Jong-il dies. Kim Jong-un presides at his funeral, is hailed as "Great Successor" and takes over from his father as chairman of the National Defence Commission.

2012 April - The launch of a "rocket-mounted satellite", to mark the birthday of Kim Il-Sung, fails.

2012 October - Days after South Korea and the US unveil a new missile deal, North Korea says it has missiles that can hit the US mainland.

2012 December - A North Korean rocket launch puts a satellite into orbit, after the failure to do so in April. The UN, including China, regards this as a violation of a ban on North Korean ballistic missile tests, as the rocket technology is the same.

2013 January - The UN Security Council condemns the December launch.

2013 February - North Korea carries out a third nuclear test, said to be twice as big as the 2009 test.

2013 March - UN Security Council approves fresh sanctions over North Korea's nuclear test, targeting cash transfers and travel for diplomats. North Korea threatened the US with a pre-emptive nuclear attack and issues threats to South Korea over nearby islands and non-aggression pacts.

2013 April - North Korea says it will restart all facilities at its main Yongbyon nuclear complex and withdraws its workers from the South-Korean-funded Kaesong joint industrial park. It also warns foreigners to leave both North and South Korea to avoid the threat of war.

2013 May - North Korea tests four short-range missiles over one weekend. It also sentences US

tour operator Kenneth Bae to hard labour on charges of "anti-government crimes".

2013 June - North and South Korea agree to hold talks on the possibility of reopening the Kaesong joint industrial complex, as well as to restore a key Red Cross hotline.

2013 July - Panama charges crew of North Korean ship detained after it was found to be carrying weapons. Cuba says it sent the weapons to North Korea for repairs.

Taken from the BBC World News website -
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-pacific-15278612>

UN Involvement, Relevant Resolutions, Treaties and Events:

Even during the Korean War, the United Nations played a crucial role, and continues to do so in today's world with the Korean crisis. The UN, joined by the economic and political influence of the United States fought against the DPRK in the Korean War, on the quest of containing communism. The UN so far has attempted to stop North Korean aggression multiple times, in a number of ways. This includes denuclearisation negotiation, UN envoys and the six-party talks, but none of these gave results. As such, the UN turned to economic and political sanctions, tightening them every time an incident took place.

As mentioned before, the NPT (Non-Proliferation Treaty) is an important document. With almost all members of the United Nations being signatories of the treaty, North Korea remains the only country to have withdrawn from it, which means any referral to be made, or legislation to apply to them does not apply to North Korea, making it difficult for any UN jurisdiction. The Nuclear safeguards agreement (INFCIRC/403) is also an important document to look at as regards to North Korea's violation of international nuclear non-proliferation and use.

Relevant UN Security Council Resolutions to look at:

- 2087 condemns the DPRK's ballistic missile launch on 28 December 2012; reaffirms travel bans and asset freezes set up in previous resolutions,
- 1718 an arms embargo, assets freeze, and travel ban on DPRK,
- 1874 an arms embargo, a ban on the export of luxury goods to the DPRK, a travel ban, an assets freeze, and nuclear, ballistic missiles and other WMD programs-related embargo in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) which was extended past 2012,

- 2094 expansion and strengthening of sanctions from Resolution 1718; additional travel bans and asset freezes.

Taken from <http://www.nti.org/treaties-and-regimes/un-security-council/>

Evaluation of Previous Attempts to Solve the Issue:

The most 'official' action that has been taken in order to solve the issue has been placing economic and political sanctions on North Korea, which clearly has not worked. They have been able to get away with violating all treaties and agreements they took part in, before apologising and making a peace offering in order to receive aid to subsidise the hunger levels within the country. Clearly, sanctions do not pose a serious enough threat to North Korea to be able to stop their nuclear proliferation. They sent away nuclear investigators and UN envoys alike and as such, it is clear that the UN must come up with a sharper solution – one that threatens North Korea enough to be willing to come to the negotiating table.

Of course, the main reason why North Korean aggression is so urgent is because of their nuclear arsenal. Without such weaponry, the threats of attack would not be taken seriously, as these threats are not the first and the international community is by now used to this behaviour. Nonetheless, with such potential power in their hands, it is by no means one of the UN's options to simply ignore the unrest. Finding a way to disable North Korea by securing its borders is the best way to at least contain the aggression.

Possible Solutions:

Possible solutions may include:

- Total political and economic isolation – This is of course a drastic idea, to cut off an entire country which relies on foreign goods to be able to feed its people, however given the outcomes of action taken so far, it is clear that North Korea seemingly has nothing to fear. If even its allies sign a resolution that suggests that unless North Korea proves the destruction of their nuclear weapons, they will not receive any aid from the United Nations members, this may be enough of a push to at least trigger peace talks. Naturally, bluffing is not a concept that should be part of the UN.
- Action to be taken by the Chinese – China has acted as a mediator, and as such, talks between the Chinese and North Korean leaders, coming up with demands that may be negotiated with other parties may ease the tensions. This may be a repetition of the six-party talks, but with China playing a leading role, neutralizing the US and North Korea, debates may give fruit.
- A two-way denuclearization treaty – If the US and the DPRK, along with other nuclear powers of the world agree to destroy a certain fraction of their nuclear weapons, under

the supervision of UN representatives/troops, this may subsidize tensions, giving way to potential negotiation and rebuilding damaged relations. The North Koreans having long been flailing under the impression that they are not 'taken seriously' by major world powers. At the same time, the US has for a long time publicized North Korea with an extremely negative image.

However, for this item, one concept that is absolutely imperative to achieve is international nuclear transparency. Countries such as Israel and Iran would play a large role in this, thus a nuclear power summit may be a requirement if a treaty is to be drawn. Relevant UNO's should also be present.

- Securing the DPRK's borders - This will not end the aggression unless an agreement is reached, however, in the name of containing North Korean aggression, it may be a good idea to deploy UN envoys/troops to guard borders and naval space, as this would potentially reduce the amount of international casualties, as well as disable the DPRK in causing too many problems in the region, putting them on edge. All of which, of course, should be done without infringing on the state's sovereignty.

Resources:

<http://en.rian.ru/world/20130418/180701524.html>

<http://in.reuters.com/article/2013/07/17/panama-north-korea-idINDEE96G0J020130717>

<http://www.bucknell.edu/x81337.xml>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Korean_Armistice_Agreement

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2013_Korean_crisis

<http://www.timelines.ws/countries/KOREANORTH.HTML>

<http://theweek.com/article/index/242347/timeline-north-koreas-escalating-aggression#>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-pacific-15278612>

<http://www.nuclearfiles.org/menu/key-issues/nuclear-weapons/issues/proliferation/north-korea/>

<http://www.nti.org/treaties-and-regimes/un-security-council/>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Treaty_on_the_Non-Proliferation_of_Nuclear_Weapons